

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to air "Stolen Honor" is clearly a violation of federal election law, intended to unfairly portray Senator Kerry in a negative light to advance President Bush's reelection bid. This "documentary" is clearly one-sided and is inappropriate to air so near to the election. Although I consider myself a democratic-leaning independent, I also would oppose, for example, the airing of Michael Moore's 911 documentary in a similar context. Such conduct would obviously be unethical.

Sinclair Broadcasting's action is an obvious example of the dangers of media consolidation: large corporations with their own special interests having too great of a voice to force their political agendas on our communities. In effect, Sinclair's action gives illegal additional air time to the Bush campaign in key swing states.

This does not serve the public interest. As I understand it this documentary does not discuss the "other side" of Kerry's Vietnam service and testimony before congress. I have a hard time seeing it as a documentary: it is clearly political propaganda, and is thus an improper use of the public airwaves prior to an election.

Large broadcasting corporations stand to benefit directly from Bush's reelection, and this kind of special interest should not have such an easy loophole for gaining media time for its own political gain.

According to the Seattle Times editorial board, in their endorsement of Kerry for president, "In our own industry, the Bush appointees on the Federal Communications Commission have pushed to relax restrictions on how many TV stations, radio stations and newspapers one company may own. In an industry that is the steward of the public's right to speak, this is a threat to democracy itself - and Kerry has stood up against it."

Thus, by the same logic it is clear that this documentary supports Sinclair's agenda at the expense of the public's right to the enforcement of federal election board regulations stating that candidates should receive balanced air time on public airwaves.

Please support the enforcement of federal election board regulations and the FCC's own traditional ethics by not allowing this kind of abuse of broadcasting. Fining Sinclair after the fact would be insufficient to rectify the potential damage of the corporation's actions. Please stop this broadcast before the damage occurs. Thank you.

--K. Firestone